

Where do we grow from here?

CHECKING IN ON OUR FUTURE

Should new homes be allowed in that empty field across the road? What about a manufacturing plant or a shopping center?

Should a forested area remain that way? How about other large undeveloped areas? Which ones should stay the way they are?

How do we allow for all types of housing in Clark County? How do we set aside land for parks and open space? How do we plan for water, sewers, roads, trails, and sidewalks?

These are not always simple questions with simple answers. But there is a tool that provides guidance. It is Clark County's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan, a blueprint for managing our growth over the next 20 years.

Five years into the plan, it is time for a review. Enough time has passed that we know which portions need a closer look. As we check in on specific parts of the plan, we need your thoughts and suggestions.

Why? Because it is a plan for our future. It plays a major role in making Clark County a good place to live, not just for us, but for our children and grandchildren.

So please read on.



Our current plan

Clark County's current comprehensive plan was adopted in December 1994. Over the four years that the plan was developed, thousands of people provided their opinions, recommendations, and ideas.

Work on the comprehensive plan began in response to the state's Growth Management Act. It requires fast-growing counties to develop land-use plans to meet the needs of people expected to live in those counties over the next 20 years.

Clark County's plan reflects the community's priorities. These are some key features of the plan:

- **Twenty-year urban growth areas for cities**, where most growth and development will be focused.
- **Places where business and industry can locate** to create jobs that pay enough to support families.
- **A transportation system** that includes roads, bikeways, walkways, and public transit facilities.
- **A range of housing densities**. This includes areas where housing is concentrated to make services economical and efficient. It also includes areas where housing is spread out and some public services are not provided.
- **A range of housing choices** for people at various income levels.
- **Clear differences between urban and rural areas**.

■ **Lands set aside for forestry and farming.**

■ **Rural residential zones** with lots that are large enough to retain a rural atmosphere and conduct rural activities, such as keeping and raising horses.

■ **Regional parks, trails, and open space** provided by the county; joint county/city planning for parks in urban growth areas.

COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

aka Comprehensive Land-use Plan

aka Comprehensive Plan

aka Comp Plan or Growth Plan

Regardless of what you call it, in many ways the plan defines the county and how it will look in the future. It has two main parts:

- Written goals and policies give us a framework for making land-use decisions. For example, "Provide for diversity in type, density, and location of housing..." is one broad goal.
- The map identifies the various land-use categories. It shows how land is currently used or what kind of future use is allowed. It also provides a way to coordinate planning for other improvements, such as sewers and roads, that a particular area will require.

The ball's in your backyard



Vaughn Lein

"Many people don't get involved unless something happens in their own backyard," says Vaughn Lein, chair of Clark County's Planning Commission. "But in terms of growth management, their backyard may be much bigger than they think."

That's what the Vancouver architect stated when he sat down for an interview about Clark County's upcoming Comprehensive Growth Management Plan review. Here is what he said.

Q. You've served on the planning commission for many years and were very involved in drafting the comprehensive plan in 1994. Why is this review so important?

A. "I do think there are going to be some very important decisions made in the county's upcoming review. Two major issues we'll probably be looking at are urban growth boundaries and how to handle infill. There are also many issues related to transportation. How we keep up with infrastructure needs and their costs will also have to be addressed."

Q. How will these changes affect the average person?

A. "Population growth is going to affect all of us in the years ahead, even if only indirectly. It can crowd the roads we drive to work, fill the schools our children attend, and even influence

the amount we pay to buy or rent a home."

Q. How can we plan for this population growth?

A. "I believe the county must allow some opportunities for growth while managing development at a rate that reflects our ability to provide infrastructure. The challenge will be to find the best balance for everyone in the community. That's why we need as many people as possible to get involved and express their ideas and viewpoints."

Q. Can county residents make a difference?





A. "Absolutely! I would encourage everyone to participate on committees, attend public workshops, talk to county staff, ask questions, and testify at hearings. In two words: Get involved."




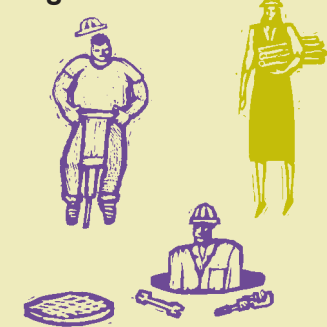
Q. You've been chair of the Planning Commission for 14 years and helped draft the current plan, attending something like 33 meetings in three months while running your own architectural firm. Why do you make such a huge commitment of time and energy to a position where you serve without pay?

A. "I've been a businessman in this community for a lot of years. I grew up here. I've always felt that I should give back to the community some of what the community has given me."

How are you going to give back to our community? By participating in Clark County's comprehensive plan review, you can help keep Clark County a good place to live. The ball's in your backyard.



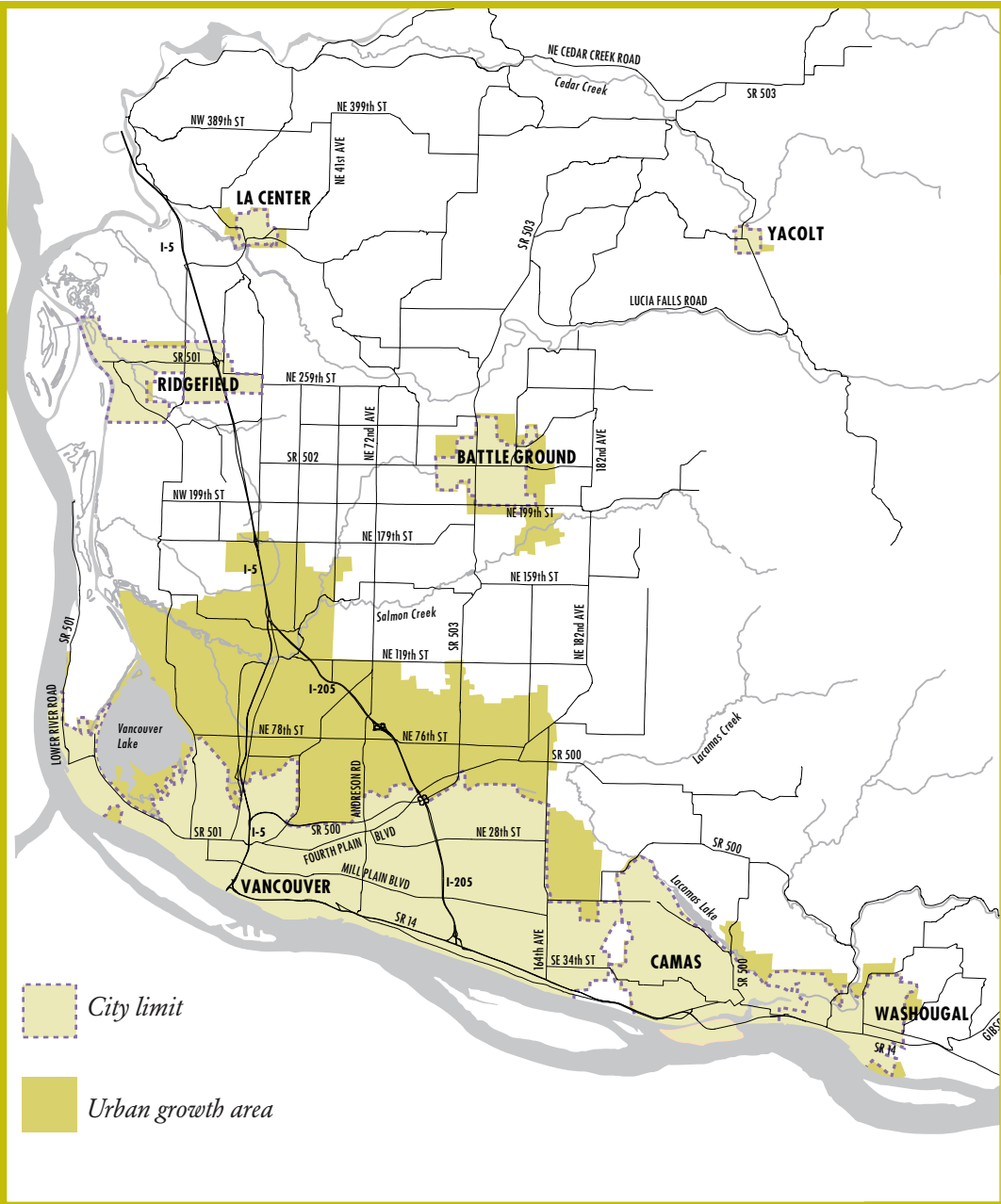
Today’s issues...and why you should care				
<div><div><div><div><div><div>The upcoming review will focus on specific parts of the current plan. Potential changes could affect you, your family, or your business in a number of ways.</div><div>The review could change:</div><div><div><div>■ The ways you can use your property.</div><div>■ The number of people living nearby.</div><div>■ The cost, type, and availability of housing in your area.</div></div></div></div><div><div>■ The number of vacant lots available for building.</div><div>■ The location of shopping and other commercial services.</div><div>■ The number, type, and location of jobs.</div><div>■ The amount of traffic.</div></div></div></div><div><div>Many of the parts up for review are related to each other.</div><div>They are parts that:</div><div><div>■ Were identified by the Board of Clark County Commissioners along with a steering committee of elected officials from the county’s cities;</div><div>■ Need to be revisited because of legal decisions and Growth Management Act requirements; or</div></div></div><div><div>■ May need to be changed because more or better information is now available.</div><div>Each topic is summarized below. For more details, please call (360) 397-2375 ext. 4993 or visit Clark County’s web site at www.co.clark.wa.us.</div></div></div></div> <div><div>▼</div></div>				
WHAT’S UP FOR REVIEW?	WHAT DOES THE PLAN SAY?	WHAT’S THE GOAL?	WHY IS THIS UP FOR REVIEW?	WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?
<div><div>Revisiting urban growth areas</div><div></div></div>	<div><div>■ An <i>urban growth boundary</i>, or UGB, is the line that shows the projected growth area around a city. The land inside the boundary is called an <i>urban growth area</i>, or UGA. Most of the county's new growth is expected to take place within the UGAs.</div><div>■ Boundaries are moved only if development has occurred on 75 percent of buildable residential or commercial land, or 50 percent of industrial land. This can be done once every five years during the plan review.</div></div>	<div><div>■ To provide public services in an efficient manner.</div><div>■ To conserve rural lands, environmentally sensitive lands, and natural resources.</div></div>	<div><div>■ Some people believe UGAs* should be expanded to allow more building now. Others think there is enough buildable land within existing boundaries.</div><div>■ Some people believe tight boundaries would help maintain the county's character and livability. Others are concerned about how boundaries could affect density.</div></div>	<div><div>■ Have we met the 75 or 50 percent levels set by the plan? Should we keep that rule? Should we allow boundaries to move more than once every five years?</div><div>■ Do we need more land for urban development? How much do we need for farming and forestry?</div><div>■ Should we keep boundaries the same, increasing the density of housing and businesses within them?</div></div>
<div><div>Tracking population growth</div><div></div></div>	<div><div>■ The state's Office of Financial Management develops a low, medium, and high growth projection for the county over the 20-year planning period. Our comprehensive plan is based on the high growth projection of 1.75 percent each year.</div></div>	<div><div>■ To select a population growth projection that will be realistic for the planning period.</div></div>	<div><div>■ Although growth has recently slowed, we have grown more than twice as fast as the 1.75 percent annual rate estimated in the current plan.</div><div>■ There will be a variety of problems if we do not plan for the number of people we can realistically expect.</div></div>	<div><div>■ Has the population growth exceeded what was expected in each city and in the unincorporated areas of the county?</div><div>■ What happens if the planning projections prove to be unrealistic?</div></div>
<div><div>Planning for a variety of housing</div><div></div></div>	<div><div>■ There should be diversity in the kind, density, and location of housing within the county and its cities for both renters and owners.</div><div>■ New housing construction should be 40 percent multi-family (apartments, condominiums, etc.) and 60 percent single-family within each UGA.*</div></div>	<div><div>■ To plan housing for the existing and future needs of people at all income levels.</div><div>■ To house more people in urban areas.</div></div>	<div><div>■ Only Vancouver comes close to meeting the 40 percent multi-family goal.</div><div>■ Some areas of the county have experienced more building than anticipated. Others have had difficulties providing public services such as sewer, water, and roads.</div><div>■ The plan calls for about 416,000 people to live in Clark County by the year 2012. Our current population is about 345,000. Enough residential land must be set aside for housing to meet everyone's needs.</div></div>	<div><div>■ How will housing be distributed between the individual cities and the unincorporated areas of Clark County?</div><div>■ How can we provide housing choices and help create an adequate range of housing for people at all income levels?</div><div>■ Should cities other than Vancouver provide an equal proportion of multi-family housing?</div><div>■ How can we help diverse housing styles blend with our neighborhoods? How can we retain the character of our communities?</div></div>
<div><div>Balancing growth in rural and urban areas</div><div></div></div>	<div><div>■ Eighty-one percent of our population should live inside UGAs* by the year 2012, with 19 percent outside the urban areas.</div></div>	<div><div>■ To avoid sprawl.</div><div>■ To focus development in urban areas where public facilities can be provided efficiently.</div><div>■ To preserve opportunities for farming and forestry.</div></div>	<div><div>■ Some people believe there are too many limits on how land may be used in rural areas. Others want to prevent further development in rural areas.</div><div>■ Some people want to focus new growth on vacant lands within UGAs*. Others are concerned about how neighborhoods will be affected by more people living nearby.</div></div>	<div><div>■ How many people can rural areas handle within existing zoning?</div><div>■ Should we continue to plan for roughly one fifth of us to live in rural areas?</div></div>

WHAT’S UP FOR REVIEW?	WHAT DOES THE PLAN SAY?	WHAT’S THE GOAL?	WHY IS THIS UP FOR REVIEW?	WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?
<div><div>Deciding how many homes per acre</div><div></div></div>	<div><div>■ New construction should average 6 housing units per acre for single-family developments and 16 units per acre for multi-family developments.</div></div>	<div><div>To promote densities within cities that:</div><div><div>■ Make efficient use of land and maintain differences between urban areas and rural areas.</div><div>■ Make public services in urban areas cost-effective.</div></div></div>	<div><div>■ New multi-family development is occurring at an average density of 16.2 units per acre. However, it is lagging in the county outside Vancouver.</div><div>■ New single-family development is occurring at an average density of 4.8 units per acre instead of 6.</div><div>■ Recent state laws require the county and its cities to find ways to house more people within the current UGAs* rather than move the boundaries.</div></div>	<div><div>■ What steps should we take to increase densities in urban areas to meet current goals?</div><div>■ Should we increase the county's density goals so that more people live inside the current UGAs*?</div></div>
<div><div>Locating business, industry, and jobs</div><div></div></div>	<div><div>■ Plan in ways that will increase opportunities for current industries to expand and for new ones to locate here.</div></div>	<div><div>■ To attract and retain jobs that pay wages that can support a family.</div></div>	<div><div>■ Only some parts of Clark County have attracted many new jobs since 1994.</div><div>■ Much of our increased traffic congestion is due to the distance between home and work for many people.</div></div>	<div><div>■ How can we plan for and attract jobs to specific areas?</div><div>■ How can we best develop opportunities while conserving open space and rural land uses?</div><div>■ How can we minimize conflicts among adjacent land uses, including existing neighborhoods and new businesses?</div><div>■ How can we balance jobs and housing to make better use of roads and other public facilities?</div></div>
<div><div>Determining zoning</div><div></div></div>	<div><div>■ Zoning is the primary tool for managing growth according to the comprehensive plan.</div></div>	<div><div>■ To achieve the plan's vision of Clark County as a collection of separate, distinct communities surrounded by open space, agriculture, and forestry.</div></div>	<div><div>■ Any changes to the comprehensive plan could lead to changes in zoning. Zoning determines types of land use, setbacks, lot sizes, and building restrictions. It affects what you can do with your land and the way your neighborhood develops.</div></div>	<div><div>■ Which changes in the comprehensive plan will require changes in zoning?</div><div>■ What changes are suitable for residential, commercial, and industrial zoning?</div></div>
<div><div>Concurrency and paying for growth</div><div></div></div>	<div><div>■ Before a new development is approved, concurrency requires that public facilities such as sewers and water are already in place. Roads must be in place or funded for construction within three years.</div></div>	<div><div>■ To encourage development in areas where public facilities already exist and are capable of serving more people.</div></div>	<div><div>■ The county and local governments have between \$50 and \$75 million less than is needed to fund the road facilities that are their responsibility under the current plan. If we can't meet our transportation needs, congestion is likely to increase.</div><div>■ Some parts of the county have had to halt development until they could provide adequate public services and facilities.</div></div>	<div><div>■ How can we direct growth from rapidly growing UGAs* to slower growing UGAs* that are better able to meet concurrency requirements?</div><div>■ Do the county and each city have enough funding to provide the infrastructure identified in their comprehensive plans? If not, how can the infrastructure be funded?</div><div>■ How will jurisdictions provide sewer, water, and roads to meet their added growth?</div></div>

** Each of the county’s cities has an urban growth boundary. The land inside that boundary is an urban growth area, or UGA. An urban growth area is where most new growth is expected to occur over the next 20 years.*



1994	1995... .. 2000	2001	2002... .. 2006
<div><div>December</div><div>Plan adopted</div></div>	<div><div>September 16</div><div>Citizens Speak, Part 1: A Countywide Assembly</div></div> <div><div>September to October</div><div>Meetings of work groups and community groups</div></div> <div><div>November</div><div>Citizens Speak, Part 2: A Countywide Assembly</div></div> <div><div>Early December</div><div>Clark County Planning Commission review and recommendations</div></div> <div><div>Mid December</div><div>Steering Committee review</div></div>	<div><div>January</div><div>Board of County Commissioners hearing and action on policy direction</div></div> <div><div>November</div><div>Clark County Planning Commission review and recommendations</div></div> <div><div>December</div><div>Board of County Commissioners hearing and action on changes to plan</div></div>	<div><div>Next major review of plan</div></div>



A countywide check-in: county and cities all reviewing plans

Besides the review of the county plan, each city within Clark County is revisiting its own land-use plan. This includes the land within the city and its urban growth boundary, which identifies where growth is planned beyond the current city limits.

The cities’ plans will be folded into the plan for the county. Although the cities develop plans for their own individual areas, they must also be consistent with countywide planning policies. To help coordinate these efforts, a steering committee of the county commissioners and elected officials from each city meet monthly to discuss issues involving multiple jurisdictions.

The steering committee is not a decision-making group. The county commissioners are responsible for adopting the overall county plan and approving the cities’ individual plans. The cities are responsible for planning issues that concern their individual jurisdictions.

This map shows each city’s current city limits and its urban growth boundary. For information about the cities’ planning activities, please contact:

- Battle Ground – Eric Holmes 342-5000
- Camas – Martin Snell 834-3451
- La Center – Mayor Elizabeth Cerveny 263-1154
- Ridgefield – Mayor Tim Thompson 887-3557
- Vancouver – Bryan Snodgrass 735-8875
- Washougal – Monty Anderson 835-8501
- Woodland – Steve Langdon 225-8281
- Yacolt – Mayor Jim Robertson 686-3922



WANTED

Invitations

Would you like more information about the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan? Do you have a group of people – neighbors, a civic organization, a group of friends – who would like to talk about comprehensive plan issues?

We can make it happen! All we need is an invitation. Just give us a call, drop us a note, or send us an e-mail. See contact information below for ways to reach us.

We will provide staff and handouts. All you need to do is supply the place and time. The more people who share their thoughts on the issues, the better the outcome. Let’s get together!

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CHECKING IN ON OUR FUTURE

Check in with us. It’s your turn.

Talk with us about your ideas, concerns, questions. *Citizens Speak, Part I: A Countywide Assembly on the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan Review*

Saturday, September 16, 2000
8:30am - 12:30pm
Clark College, Foster Auditorium
1800 E. McLoughlin, Vancouver

This is a chance for you to speak with other county residents and decision-makers about how we continue to

manage growth. The assembly will include displays of information about the comprehensive plan review, small group discussions about issues, and panel presentations about the countywide nature of the plan. The plan will shape our future for years to come. Please join us.

Citizens Speak, Part II, will take place in mid-November. Please watch for more information.

This is the only mailing that will be sent to every Clark County home, but you can continue to receive information by contacting us.

- **Columbian Info-line** (for recorded information about upcoming activities): (360)699-6000, mailbox 3632.
- **E-mail:** compplan@co.clark.wa.us.
- **Mailing address:** Comprehensive Plan, P.O. Box 9810, Vancouver, WA 98666.
- **Information line:** (360)397-2375 ext. 4993; TDD (360)397-6057.
- **Web site:** through Clark County’s home page at www.co.clark.wa.us.

You can reach us in the following ways: questions, and note any comments or ideas. We’ll put you on our mailing list for updated information, answer your questions, and note any comments or ideas. If you want to have a say in how Clark County plans for growth, or if you would just like to know more, please read this material and contact us. We’ll put you on our mailing list for updated information, answer your questions, and note any comments or ideas.

Expressing your views, staying informed
It’s our future. And we know you have opinions about it.

PLEASE SAVE

Where do we grow from here?
CHECKING IN ON OUR FUTURE

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CLARK COUNTY
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Clark County
Community Development
PO Box 9810
Vancouver, WA 98666-9810

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